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*Christian Submission to Civil Government.*

A

# DISCOURSE

PREACHED ON JANUARY 30, 1780,

AT THE

MEETING-HOUSE IN ST. ANDREW'S,

CAMBRIDGE.

By ROBERT ROBINSON.

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R o m. xiii. 1—7.

*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God; a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

**W**E have been often told, christians, that good men, and particularly ministers of religion, have nothing to do with what they call politicks or civil government. We beg leave to

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disclaim



disclaim this groundless opinion, and to offer at least one argument against it. Good men are bound by the religion of Jesus Christ to discharge those duties, which as good subjects they owe to their civil governors: but it is impossible to discharge an obligation as good men, that is, wisely and virtuously, without knowing the nature, the extent, and the motives of it. Ministers are both bound, in common with other christians, to perform the duties of good subjects, and also to explain the nature and enforce the practice of them on others. How can they do so, unless they understand the subject themselves, and publicly treat of it in the course of their ministrations? What! was not the writer of the epistle to the Romans a good man? Was not he an inspired minister of Christ? Yet he addressed all christians in these words, *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.* And so on.

Let us then apply ourselves to the subject, and let me suppose you will give such attention to it as its importance demands. If any occasional hearers



hearers ridicule either the subject itself, or the plain manner in which it will be taught, we glory in affirming, we have no feelings on this occasion. We speak to be understood, and if we be so happy as to convey our ideas, to inform any of their duty, and engage them to practise it, we have our reward. May the Governor of the Universe, the God of order, condescend to write the doctrine on all our hearts !

I freely confess, my brethren, I never read the text without emotions of pity. Pity that such writers as S. Paul, pity that such a wise and well written period as this, naturally so conducive to the good of society, should be so perverted and misconstrued as they have been by self-interested expositors ! In the times of our ancestors, in the days of despotism, thousands and tens of thousands have been expended in hiring pens to pervert, or in rewarding them for perverting, the sacred oracles of God, and thus S. Paul has been converted into a conspirator against the rights of mankind, and made to affirm, that those Britons who *resisted* the unconstitutional polity of a Stuart, that such protestants as refused to practise the superstitions of a popish prince, *should receive to themselves eternal damnation.* What could be

done in the dilemma, into which some of our former kings had brought themselves? Either the bible must be taken away from the people, or the people must be taught that it spoke a language suited to the views of their rulers. But God forbid we should think S. Paul an enemy to civil and religious liberty! He derived his sentiments of government from the most just and humane of all rulers, and he was an inconvertible divine, for his gospel was in all countries and at all times *yea and Amen*. In order to give you a just notion of his doctrine, we shall lay down three propositions, and explain them as we go on.

I. *The apostle speaks in the text of GOVERNMENT, not of governors.* This is the true key of the thirteenth of Romans, and with this the whole period, that has been read to you, softly opens to the hand of a child. *Let every soul be subject to civil government—there is no government but of God—the governments that be are ordained of God. Whosoever th therefore resisteth government, resisteth the ordinance of God—Wilt thou have nothing to fear from government? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.*

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That this is the meaning of the apostle is evident, I think, from the following considerations. First, The propositions laid down in the text are not true of all civil governors: but they are all both true and useful, if applied to government itself. Let us try one or two for example.

Wilt thou then not be afraid of the *ruler, Nero*? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of Nero. Paul knew better than to affirm this: but take the words in the other sense, and they contain a truth of excellent use. Wilt thou then not be afraid of *government*? Do that which is good, and thou shalt enjoy the benefit of government: perhaps share the honours of it.

Thus again, *The powers that be are ordained of God*. The apostle could not mean to affirm, that the civil governors then reigning in the world had been immediately ordained of God to reign. Some of them had risen to govern by the choice of the people, others by the adoption of their predecessors, and others by fraud and bribery, violence and blood: but no missionary from heaven had called out and anointed any one of them.

Nor



Nor could the apostle mean to affirm, that any form of civil government was of divine appointment, for there had been in the world before his time, and there were when he wrote these words, as there have been ever since, various forms of civil government: but none of them of divine institution. Civil government is one thing, and the mode of administering it another. The first is an institute of God, the last a mere effect of human reason. The forms of administering government are generally reducible to three. There is the monarchical, in which one monarch governs, either by himself, and then it is an absolute monarchy, or with the assistance of others, and then it is a mixt monarchy. There is the aristocratical, which is in the hand of nobles. There is lastly the democratical, where the administration of government is, by the suffrages of the people, put into the hands of a body selected from themselves. Neither of these is of divine appointment, for all the revealed institutes of God are contained in the bible, and there we have no command on this subject. The truth is, the best mode of governing is a matter of reasoning and not of faith, and the divine spirit has not wasted the noble gift of inspiration upon unnecessary subjects. Mankind are left here to the use of  
their

their reason, and reason is sufficient on this article without revelation, as we have seen in many pagan governments.

Of all, who have taught the divine right of any mode of government, surely those foreign declaimers, who affirm the divine right of absolute monarchy, are the most unhappy of mankind in the choice of their arguments. They leave the ground of christian action, the new testament, they appeal to maxims of Jewish polity long since abolished, and involve themselves in the difficulty of reconciling ancient Jewish history to their own notion. They could not choose a book less to their purpose, as it would be easy in a multitude of instances to shew.

We are then to suppose S. Paul speaking of civil government in general. *The powers that be are ordained of God*, is as much as to say, Civil government in every country, let it be vested where it may, is agreeable to the original design of the wise Creator, who formed mankind for society, and disposed them so as to render order and government necessary. Observe a family. The children have wants: but no means of supplying them. The parents have power to supply those wants,

wants, and are disposed to administer to the children. Look into a manufactory, that employs ten thousand persons. One thousand are formed capable of comprehending and performing only a small inconsiderable part of the labour of the work; another thousand are equal to another narrow circle, they form the next link in the chain: but there is one man who seems to have as much soul as providence has bestowed on all the rest; he comprehends the whole, and is therefore naturally formed to arrange, dispose, direct and govern all. The same may be said of a general and his army, an admiral and his fleet, a prince and his people, and hence arise the noble works of all sorts, that cover the earth, and the moral obligations, that unite man to man. Indeed genius without strength would be a source of misery, as strength without skill would be a weight of mischief. The distribution, that providence has made of wisdom to one, patience to another, courage to a third, strength to a fourth, fancy and fire to this man, corrective coolness of judgment to that, and so on, affords a full demonstration that reciprocal aid was originally intended to be established by the Creator, that the subordination of some and the superiority of others were first principles of creation, and consequently that he who resisteth civil order



order and government, *resisteth the ordinance of God*; just as the man, who revels through the night, and sleeps all the day, *resisteth*, as far as he can, *the ordinances of heaven\**, that is, the order of darkness and light established in the heavens by the Creator of the world.

Of this conformity to order the apostle was a passionate admirer, and of this he speaks in the text. In the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians he treats of the order and beauty of *nature*, of things celestial and things terrestrial, and observes, that there is an order analogous to it established in the church, a *spiritual* order pervading, cementing, and adorning the whole, from the first Great Spirit to the last resurrection. There is *God all in all*—there is a *Son subject unto him*—there is a second *Adam*, the head of a new world, in which *every man* is placed *in his own order*—*Christ the first fruits*; *afterward they that are Christ's at his coming*. In the twelfth chapter of the same epistle, he treats of *moral* order directed by christian doctrine, under the beautiful similitude of a natural body governed by reason, in which *the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the*

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\* Jer. xxxiii. 25.

*head to the feet, I have no need of you.* In this chapter he speaks of *civil* order, the arrangement of human societies, and, agreeably to his general favourite notion of analogy, calls it an *ordinance* of God, by which he means to affirm, that civil government is founded on the nature of things, and that there is a fitness between that and those abilities and dispositions, which the Creator hath formed in mankind. Were the world all innocent, civil government would naturally rise out of eminent abilities and virtues (for there might be degrees of excellence where all were good.) If the world were all vicious, government (such as it would be) would necessarily rise out of dread of injury. The world in its present state is both strengthened by virtue and endangered by vice, and both render government necessary. Here are black crimes, producing great injuries; it is natural for the defenceless to desire protection from these, and it is just, and therefore an institute of God, that the strong should defend the weak. Here are small degrees of intelligence and virtue wishing to be directed and emboldened to excel, and here are superior abilities and qualities ready to direct and improve them. He, therefore, that resisteth civil government, resisteth the manifest design of God, which is to gratify

tify the lawful wishes of all mankind, to intimidate vice, to cherish virtue, and so to produce social felicity.

What! do all civil governments produce these effects? And does S. Paul mean to affirm, that any sort of polity renders society happy? Our answer will be contained in the second proposition, to which let us proceed.

II. *The apostle speaks in the text of a good civil government.* The proofs of this lie in the text, and the least attentive may perceive them. S. Paul's *powers are of God.* Did God ever commission vice, and give legal powers to illegal actions? The apostle's *rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil: ministers of God to us for good:* and to these we are to be *subject for conscience sake.* It must therefore be a good government, of which he speaks; for the *conscience* of a christian can never be bound over to vice and misery.

Two questions naturally arise here, first, What is a good civil government? next, Who is to judge when a civil government is good?

In answer to the first we beg leave to observe, that we are not now to treat of this question in a



political but in a moral view. They, who investigate the subject as politicians, compare monarchy with aristocracy, and both with a democratical government, and determine for one in preference to the other two: but a christian view of government regards less the mode of administration than the order administered. In this view we affirm a monarchy is a good government, and it is not; an aristocracy is a good government, and it is not; and so of the last, for each may produce social happiness, and either may destroy it.

In general the goodness of a government depends on two things—the good *principles*, which constitute it—and the proper *powers*, that realize these principles, and reduce them to practice in actual administration. Mankind have certain native inherent rights, securities of these rights are the first principles of a good constitution: but as the best constitution, like every thing human, may degenerate, a government is only good, when it retains power to reduce its principles to practice.

To be more particular. That we call a good government, which places the *person* of each individual in security. This article includes the life and limbs, the health and reputation of every  
innocent

innocent member of society. *Powers*, that preserve all these, *are of God*, for these are his gifts, and they are the natural rights of all mankind.

Again, That is a good civil government, which insures to the citizen his personal *liberty*, and subjects none to the fear of arbitrary imprisonment or exile. How miserable are those countries, in which innocent subjects may be instantly deprived of their liberty, rent from their families, and driven either to perish in a dungeon, or to quit their native soil, at the despotical mandate of a passionate ruler !

A good civil government protects each individual in the absolute enjoyment and disposal of his *property*. Property is the ground of power, and power will always follow property. A people, who would enjoy freedom, can never be too cautious in disposing of their *property*. While they hold it themselves, they hold the golden sceptre of government: when they transfer it to their rulers, and alienate it from themselves, they exchange that sceptre of gold for a rod of iron, which, not unfrequently, smites and punishes them for their folly.

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That is a good civil government, which allows and protects the rights of *conscience*. This is one of the dearest rights of an intelligent being, and the fullest enjoyment of it cannot, in a well ordered state, include any civil disability; on the contrary, a good conscience is the best qualification of a magistrate. Nothing can contribute more to the moral good of a nation than freeing conscience from all human restraints, and it may justly be questioned, whether the sad want of religious principle, and the consequent depravity of manners, of which some whole nations complain, be not in a great measure owing to arbitrary impositions on conscience, the setting of human authority in this throne of Almighty God.

That we rightly deem a good civil government, which renders *justice* cheap to the poor, easy to the illiterate, accessible to all. No government can be good, unless it includes an universal responsibility, and provides for the display of public virtue, or the detection of public iniquity, by subjecting all to account for the wealth, the power, and the trust committed to them for the general good. Government is so far perfect or imperfect as it renders the calling of administrators to account easy or difficult.

These



These are a few outlines of such a government as S. Paul meant in the text. To such a government and to no other do his propositions agree. Let us suppose a state the reverse of all this, and let us see how little like a man, a christian, or an apostle, S. Paul would seem, were he to speak thus. *The powers that be are ordained of God to imprison, to banish, and to kill the citizens. Whosoever resisteth the power, that oppresseth the consciences, and wastes the property of the people, resisteth the ordinance of God. Let every soul be so subject to these higher powers, as to place them above the reach of law, beyond the power of all human restraint.*

Alas ! how little must they know the apostle, who imagine he taught such a doctrine as this ! His gospel would then have been *yea*, and his politics *no*, that is, the one would have consisted of principles the most just and liberal, the other of principles directly opposite, and had power once protected the iniquitous side, there would not have remained to mankind in future so much as one gleam of hope of redemption from abounding vice and misery.

We ask further, who is to judge when a government

vernment is good? We answer, in an absolute monarchy the monarch alone; in an aristocracy the nobles only; in a democracy the people: but, in a mixed state, in which the excellencies of the three are united, judging in ordinary cases belongs to delegates, and in extraordinary cases it reverts to the people, the allowed origin of power, agreeably to that original contract, real or supposed, by which the people agreed to confer, and the delegates to accept certain honours and emoluments for the discharge of prescribed services, of the punctual performance of which conditions the contractors are to judge. Natural justice requires a stipulated service for a stipulated sum, and it would be miserable folly in contracting parties to deprive themselves of the right of judging whether the stipulated conditions were performed. Take away the power of inspecting and coercing the conditions of a contract, and the remaining right of making one is at best only a power of self deception, and it may be in many cases an engine of self destruction.

The writer of our text was a private citizen, and to private citizens he addressed this epistle: yet he treats here of government in general, and the duty of rulers in particular, and he adds the  
*cause,*

*cause*, the reason, for which his readers were to *pay tribute*. In the apostle's system, the people were to judge to whom *honour* and *tribute* were due, they were to *render* what they thought due to each degree of magistratical merit, and they were to *pay* what tribute they judged necessary. The rulers were not to hire the people: but the people, who held the publick purse, were to pay tribute to the rulers. Indeed, christians at Rome had lost, along with the rest of their fellow citizens, the power of restraining the iniquity of their rulers: but they had never relinquished the right of judging when they deserved restraint. A good government, like a good religion, or a fair trade, deals very little in secrets: it *commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God*, and on this account our text informs us, we *must needs be subject for conscience sake*. This leads us to the last article.

III. *The non-resistance inculcated in the text must be RESTRAINED TO THE SUBJECT, of which the apostle speaks.* The laws of right reasoning require us to put no more in the conclusion than the premises contain. The reasons of a duty are a sort of premises, the practice of it a kind of conclusion. The apostle therefore means to ex-

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hort us never to resist: but always to support a good civil government.

Suppose a state, in which rulers were not a terror to *evil* works, but to *good*; can we imagine an apostle would exhort a people able to right themselves in this manner? *Wilt thou have nothing to fear from authority? Do that which is EVIL, and thou shalt have praise of the same. But if thou do that which is GOOD, be afraid, for the ruler is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth GOOD. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject for conscience sake; for, for this cause pay ye tribute.* Should men pay for the violation of their rights? And would an apostle cherish the dominion of sin? My brethren, we congratulate you, that ye are Britons—that your constitution, the wisdom of ages, was fully elucidated at the happy æra of the revolution—that the people were then allowed to be the origin of power, having a right to claim redress of grievances, and in extraordinary cases to redress themselves. Then the just sentiments of S. Paul were interwoven in the bill of rights, and the bible and the senate united to declare, *Rulers shall be ministers of God to us for GOOD, and for this cause will we pay them tribute.* Rulers shall hold the power, and the people the purse.

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To illustrate this part of our subject, let us divide it into the two great branches of *civil* and *religious* liberty, and let us exemplify both in our apostle. In regard to *religious* liberty, we may observe—that S. Paul was not of the religion of the prince—that his religion was destructive of paganism, the established religion—and that he devoted his whole life to propagate his own, and consequently to diminish that of the rulers. If this was resistance, S. Paul resisted: but this was not the resistance which he spoke against in the text. There he censures a resistance of a good government: but a good government, by allowing the rights of conscience retains nothing on this article to be resisted by a good man. If the apostle, in exercising the rights of his own conscience, did not injure the rights of other men; if he made use of no civil coercion to propagate his doctrine; if he raised no tumult, no sedition: but confined himself to the calm methods of reasoning and conversing on, preaching, publishing and practising what he thought religious truth, he should not have fallen a sacrifice to the envy or resentment of his enemies, his blood should not have stained the pretended government of Rome. Thus his own practice explained his doctrine, and he thought himself a good subject although he kept none of

the festivals of the emperor Nero, in whose reign he wrote the text. The festivals! the institutes! the religion of Nero! What are we saying? Even Tacitus, a pagan, and every other Roman historian would reprove us; they never thought Nero had any religion; they considered him as a bad man, unworthy of the honours, which had been conferred on him. S. Paul thought him a *lion\**, reigning over men as beast over beast, where appetite and strength are instead of reason and law. Paganism, my brethren, made such men high priests, and placed them at the head of the religion of whole countries, and popery, which is paganism disguised, hath copied the example. Hence idiots and atheists have been the reputed wisdom of a nation, and the most iniquitous of men the standards of piety to God and benevolence to their fellow creatures. Were it possible for Paul to insult my reason and my conscience by requiring my conformity to the religion of such rulers as catholicks adore, even Paul should be no apostle to me.

Let us advert a moment to *civil* liberty. Let us suppose our apostle admitted to an interview with a number of Roman senators, proposing to them

\* 2 Tim. iv. 17.



them the christian religion, and endeavouring to recommend it in some such manner as this. “ Illustrious Romans! The religion, which I have the honour to propose to you, is the wisdom of God, and its object is the production of the greatest social happiness. In every point of view, permit me to affirm, it excels that, which you profess: and there is one article, that is, civil liberty, on which christianity sheds the brightest glory. Your ancestors thought, mankind were born with certain inherent rights, they considered the security of these rights the end of civil government, when magistrates invaded them, they reclaimed the power, with which they had intrusted them, and placed it in other hands under new restrictions. Your highest notion of a supreme magistrate is, that he is a father and not a destroyer of his country, and your poets and historians, your theatres and senates all unite in celebrating the praises of such men. A lover of his country is a saint, a hero, a deity with you. But christianity reverses all these ideas. It allows, indeed, that ye were born with as many rights as your predecessors, and one more, a right to enjoy this invaluable religion: but it requires you to renounce your notions of *government*, and to submit in all cases whatever to your civil rulers for the

the time being. If the emperor allow you to live, blefs his clemency; if he unjustly cut off whole families, and depopulate whole provinces, you must not even attempt to restrain him; if he, contrary to your laws, imprison or banish your persons, take away and expend your property, reduce you from the first city in the world to the lowest of all states, you may feel your miseries: but you must not complain; or if you complain, you must not be allowed to do more; in no case may you redress your own grievances, no, not though providence and the constitution have put the means of redress amply in your own power."

. . . . According to this account, the old Romans would have been put into a worse condition by Jesus Christ than they had been in before his coming, and to have gone from paganism to christianity would have been like going *down from Jerusalem to Jericho, falling among thieves, to be stripped of raiment, wounded, and left half dead.*

Christianity is so far from sinking the dignity and felicity of man, that it conducts him to a pinnacle of glory. It teaches him a class of moral virtues, such as industry, frugality, equity, and so on. It excites him to practise these by revealing the strongest motives, such as the love of  
God,

God, the example and the death of Jesus Christ, a state of future rewards and punishments. The practice of these virtues is the way to acquire property, and property in the hand is power of civil resistance. When it is proper to make use of this power, and in what manner, we will not presume at present to inquire; suffice it to say, it must be legal, constitutional and good, otherwise it would not be the resistance of which we have been speaking.

Let us conclude. Out of our subject three reflections naturally arise, each exciting a different emotion. The first stirs up pity and horror, the second gives us pleasure, the last affects us with a mild sensibility, for which we have no name.

I. Who can help lamenting, in the first place, the deplorable condition of mankind in respect of good government. On the one hand, thousands, in all countries, destitute of all governing abilities, are aspiring to dominion, or, having obtained it, calling authority government, and confounding power to do good with a sort of indefeasible right to do wrong. On the other hand, millions of intelligent creatures devoid of all pride of nature and sense of shame, bartering the noblest rights



rights of our species for a smile and a bauble and a luxury for a day.—Hence *folly set in dignity, and the rich in low place.*—Hence *the tears of such as are oppressed, who have no comforter, for on the side of their oppressors there is power.*—Hence is seen *under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness is there, and the place of righteousness that iniquity is there.*—Hence *oppressions making wise men mad.* Hence, in a word, the ills that blast religion and learning, labour and commerce, and all the other efforts of the few to make the many happy. Can ye conceive, brethren, a lower degree of wretchedness than that, with which a prophet formerly upbraided his countrymen: *Ye have sold yourselves for nought!* Ah! would to God this were the utmost, that fordid men could do! Cruel Jews! had ye sold yourselves alone, ye would have suffered, and we might have profited by your example: but your guiltless countrymen, your wives, your children, your innocent posterity yet unborn, must they be all involved in your punishment as if they had perpetrated your crime! . . . . Here we feel the want of a religion, that opens to our faith a future state, where *the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.*

2. Great God! First and best of beings! Permit our weeping eyes to look to thee as the God of order, the patron and protector of all, who endeavour to gather up right notions, and to re-establish that fitness, which sin had subverted and wantonly thrown in shattered ruins all over the globe! Christians, the empire of God is an empire of order, and the gospel of Christ is intended to diffuse it among all ranks and degrees of men. The perfections of the Great Supreme are engaged to give this noble design effect. Have they, think ye, spent all their force? Turn from this present scene of confusion and woe—enter into your closets—fix your attention on the King of Kings, who disdains to reign by power alone, and who makes *judgment and justice the bases of his throne*. Behold! HE condescends to treat his intelligent creatures like men, and makes them judges between him and his vineyard.\* The Son, too, the *express image* of the Father, intends to *deliver up the kingdom*†, and to display the rectitude of his government of it, in the sight of angels and men. Then *every eye shall see him*, and, although they, who resisted his wise and benevolent plan, shall wail and mourn, yet he will persevere in his first design, he will cause every one to

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\* Isa. v.

† 1 Cor. xv.

give account of his deeds done in the body, and he will render to all their dues, honour to whom honour, and shame to whom shame is due. Thus will he assort mankind, and cause in a future state universal justice through everlasting ages to reign. Delightful prospect! Believer! fill thine eye with this object, and catch a flame, that shall never go out.

In the present momentary state, Providence, indeed, sometimes permits society to fall into dreadful disorders, which, like floods, first overflow the low grounds, and at last roll back, sap and subvert the proud mountains whence they fell, mixing all in one general confusion; for despotic principles are as fatal to thrones as to cottages, a while they afflict the last, but in the end they never fail to crumble the first into ruins. Fear nothing, then, my countrymen, from foreign foes. The thrones of Bourbon are not the powers we choose, they are *thrones of iniquity*, shall they *have fellowship with God*? So many lives as they have unjustly cut off, so much publick property as they have misapplied, so much liberty as they have taken from mankind, so many upright consciences as they have oppressed, so much fraud and violence as they have practised, so much  
human



human felicity as they have destroyed, just so much guilt have they acquired, and so much punishment, sooner or later, will the Omnipotence, that supports the just order of the universe, inflict on them. I fear nothing from their arms: but their principles, their maxims of government I fear. Ah! should my countrymen ever imbibe the errors of their *government* (so they call their *power*.) and the vices that give those errors effect, we should be poisoned in our vitals, and then, who could help exclaiming, *Britain is falling, is falling?* . . . Oh! no, my country must not fall . . . or, if it fall, let me fall with it, and be intombed in its ruins! Let me have the honour of entering the world of order struggling for what gives that world all its beauty and glory.

3. Finally, we reflect with an emotion made up of pleasure, gratitude, hope and fear, on the recovery to order, civil and sacred, begun in civil government by right reason in the world, and in the hearts of good men by christian faith. Our ancestors, like others, were sunk in stupidity and sin; half were tyrants and half were slaves: but on them the light of reason and the religion of Jesus Christ shone, and we, my brethren, we are  
entered

entered into their labours. We enjoy the benefits of their reasoning, writing, sufferings and blood. Why are we not a nation all wise and good ! Why not all burning with zeal for the welfare of our country, and attached to all the principles, that brought it out of the darkness of despotism into the broad day of light and liberty ! Divine order ! where shall we find thee ? In our bosoms ? In our families ? In our churches ? In the whole world ? Would to God it might pervade all ! It gives us pleasure to see it in so many. It excites our gratitude to God the author for what we have, and our hope that it will increase more and more. Yet we behold with reverence and fear ; for order begun in us resembles the morning of a spring day, it has obscurity clouds and rain, the remains of a winter just gone, and brightness and beauty, the beginnings of a summer, now at hand. May God, of his infinite mercy, succeed every effort to extend a virtuous order ! May he free us all from the immoderate passion of subduing others, and give us grace to govern ourselves. To him be honour and glory for ever ! Amen.



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from the original notes which the translator has subjoined, in  
which, somewhat after the manner, though not in the spirit  
of Bayle, he has introduced a great variety of remarks and quo-  
tations, which answer a better purpose than that of elucidating  
the text, affording the reader much valuable information and  
agreeable entertainment. These notes are exceedingly miscel-  
laneous, consisting of pertinent examples of the beauties or  
faults of preaching, from various writers, and these many of  
them little known, curious and often homourous anecdotes,  
sensible reflections, and bold and free strokes of satire. From  
this miscellany we could, with pleasure, select many amusing  
articles; but we chuse rather to fill up the space which we can  
allot to this work, with a few extracts from the Translator's  
introductory essays, from which it will appear that he writes  
with great boldness of language, and with all the zeal of a  
reformer.”

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